CLAIM(S)

What is claimed is:

1.   A pluggable Raster Image Processor system, comprising:

a Raster Image Processor Manager Layer;

a pluggable Raster Image Processor Layer communicatively coupled to the Raster Image Processor Manager Layer, the pluggable Raster Image Processor Layer comprising a plurality of Raster Image Processors; and

a registry communicatively coupled to the Raster Image Processor Manager Layer and the pluggable Raster Image Processor Layer;

wherein when a job is received, the Raster Image Processor Manager Layer determines the job type and forwards the job to the pluggable Raster Image Processor Layer for processing.

2.   The pluggable Raster Image Processor of claim 1 wherein the Raster Image Processor Manage Layer obtains a job type from metadata embedded within the job.

3.   The pluggable Raster Image Processor of claim 2 wherein the Raster Image Processor Manager Layer determines the appropriate Raster Image Processor for the job type by searching the registry.

4.   The pluggable Raster Image Processor of claim 1, the pluggable Raster Image Processor Layer further comprising an interface for receiving the job from the Raster Image Processor Manager Layer and routing the job to a select one of the plurality of Raster Image Processors.

5.   The pluggable Raster Image Processor of claim 1 wherein when a new Raster Image Processor is added to the pluggable Raster Image Processor Layer, an entry is added to the registry.

6.   The pluggable Raster Image Processor system of claim 5 wherein the entry comprises a point of entry for the Raster Image Processor and at least one job type that the Raster Image Processor is capable of processing.

7.   The pluggable Raster Image Processor of claim 1, the pluggable Raster Image Processor Layer further comprising means adapted to notify the Raster Image Processor Manager Layer when a job is completed.

8.   The pluggable Raster Image Processor of claim 1, the plurality of Raster Image Processors comprising at least two selected from the group consisting of a fax Raster Image Processor, a print Raster Image Processor, a Post Office Protocol Client, a terminal access control Raster Image Processor, and a Postscript Raster Image Processor.

9.   A method for processing a Raster Image Processor, the steps comprising:
receiving a raster imaging process job
determining a job type;
selecting a Raster Imaging Processor from a plurality of Raster Image Processors;
forwarding the job to the selected Raster Image Processor; and
notifying other modules when the raster imaging process job is completed.

10.   The method of claim 9 further comprising
registering a Raster Image Processor with a registry, the registry storing the job type the Raster Image Processor is capable of processing.

11.   The method of claim 10, the selecting step comprises searching the registry for a Raster Image Processor matching the job type.

12.   The method of claim 9, the determining step comprising searching the raster imaging process job for metadata indicating the job type.

13.   The method of claim 9 further comprising;

tracking errors encountered by the Raster Image Processor when processing the raster imaging process job; and

marking the job as unserviceable after a predetermined number of errors are encountered.

14.   The method of claim 9 further comprising:

de-registering a Raster Image Processor from the plurality of Raster Image Processors.

15.   A computer readable medium of instructions with computer readable instructions stored thereon for a pluggable Raster Image Processor system, comprising:

means adapted to register a raster imaging processor;

means adapted to receive a raster imaging process job

means adapted to determine a job type;

means adapted to select the raster imaging processor from a plurality of registered raster image processors;

means adapted to forward the job to the selected Raster Image Processor; and

means adapted to notify other modules when the raster imaging process job is completed.

16.   The computer readable medium of instructions of claim 15, the means adapted to register comprising a registry, the registry storing the job type that the raster image processor is capable of processing.

17.   The computer readable medium of instructions of claim 16, the means adapted to select comprises means for searching the registry for a raster image processor matching the job type.

18.   The computer readable medium of instructions of claim 15, the means adapted to determine a job type, comprising means adapted to searching the raster imaging process job for metadata indicating the job type.

19.   The computer readable medium of instructions of claim 15 further comprising; means adapted to tracking errors encountered by the Raster Image Processor when processing the raster imaging process job; and

means adapted to marking the job as unserviceable after a predetermined number of errors are encountered.

20.   The computer readable medium of instructions of claim 15 further comprising: means adapted to de-registering a raster image processor from the plurality of raster image processors.